

SG POLICY UPDATE

The purpose of this paper is to provide the Access Delivery Group with regular updates on related policy developments within the Scottish Government. ADG members should notify SG officials of any additional policy areas that they would like to see covered within the update going forward.

INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF STUDENT SUPPORT

In response to the recommendations made by the independent review of student support (November 2017), the Scottish Government (SG) announced on 12 June that over £21 million will be invested per year by the end of this parliament to improve the financial support available to students at college and university. As part of that, in 2018/19, SG will invest over £5 million to increase the bursary for care-experienced students in Further (FE) and Higher Education (HE) to £8,100. This brings care-experienced bursary support in line with the Living Wage as recommended by the independent review. The FE care-experienced bursary will increase from £4,185 to £8,100 and the HE care-experienced bursary will rise from £7,625 to £8,100 per year. In 2019/20, SG will invest £16 million to increase and expand access to FE and HE bursaries for students from the lowest income families.

The Scottish Government recognises that there are a number of recommendations made by the Review that require further work and have committed to progressing those. This includes the work with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) on the recommendation to ensure that no student is disadvantaged due to losing social security benefits whilst studying and conducting a review of non-core and discretionary support which will include support for part-time, disabled students and carers. Further to that, the Review recommended that loans should be introduced in FE. In response to that, SG has committed to undertaking independent research, focussed on distinct groups of students, to provide evidence on demand and concerns amongst students.

15-24 LEARNER JOURNEY REVIEW

The Review has now concluded and the report was published on 10 May 2018. The report sets out our ambition for all our young people to be equipped with the skills and knowledge they need to reach their full potential, in both their careers and wider lives.

Engagement

As part of the Review, we commissioned research, undertaken by SQW Consultancy in partnership with Young Scot, into young people's experience of the education and training system in Scotland. The findings of this work were published on the Scottish Government website in early 2017.

We also published interim reports and the output from extensive engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, including with employers. This can be found on the Scottish Government's [Learner Journey Review website](#).

Findings

The report establishes five key priorities, with 17 recommendations for improvement:

1. Make it easier for young people to understand their subject and career choices at the earliest stage and providing long-term person-centred support for the young people who need this most;
2. Broaden our approach to education and reframing our offer; do more for those who get the least out of the system; ensure all young people access the high level work-based skills Scotland's economy needs;

3. Make the best use of our four year degree to give greater flexibility for more learners to move from S5 to year one of a degree, more from S6 to year 2, and more from college into years 2 and 3 of a degree, where appropriate;
4. Build collective leadership across the education and skills system;
5. Know how well our education and skills system is performing.

Next steps

In taking the Review recommendations forward, it will require strong joint leadership, supported by the right evidence base, to ensure we continue to invest in the right qualifications and right types of learning to deliver the best outcomes for our young people and for the Scottish economy.

Implementation has begun and we will meet with stakeholders and partners in the coming weeks to discuss taking this work forward.

SCOTTISH ATTAINMENT CHALLENGE

Pupil Equity Funding Events: February and March 2018.

Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) Events took place across Scotland (Glasgow x2, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Dundee, Falkirk and Kilmarnock) for Headteachers (HTs) or their delegates and local authority's representatives and partners. Grant-aided special school HTs were also invited to attend.

The events aimed to:

- Set the context of Pupil Equity Funding within the emerging framework of the Regional Improvement Collaboratives;
- Ensure a common understanding on the implementation of Pupil Equity Funding, including delivery and evaluation of impact;
- Provide direct access to research and advice and guidance on what works to close the poverty related attainment gap;
- Share learning and promote further collaboration on the use of Pupil Equity Funding.

The events were aligned to the Regional Improvement Collaboratives (RIC) to ensure they were as relevant as possible.

Each event included keynote speeches from the Deputy First Minister, the Education Endowment Foundation and Education Scotland. There was also a series of workshops delivered by schools at each event.

Our Programme Board will consider feedback and evaluation of the PEF events and this will, inform the planning for future events.

Challenge Authorities and Schools Programmes Funding 2018-19

£50 million has been allocated for challenge authorities and schools programmes to close the poverty related attainment gap.

This £50 million includes £43 million for the nine Challenge Authorities and £7 million for the 74 schools with the highest levels of deprivation.

Nine local authorities and an additional 74 individual schools have again been allocated funding from the Scottish Attainment Challenge for initiatives targeted at children living in communities affected by high levels of deprivation.